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Important *Take Back* Opportunity for Iowans to Prevent Medicine Misuse and Abuse

DES MOINES – Iowans can safely dispose of unused controlled prescription drugs at Take Back events Saturday, September 27, at more than 80 sites in several communities around the State.

“The misuse of medicines continues to be the fastest growing substance use disorder in Iowa, ultimately and tragically contributing to more prescription drug and heroin overdose deaths,” said Iowa Drug Policy Coordinator Steve Lukan. “The best prescription for reducing medicine abuse is prevention, including the education of our youth by family members and professionals.”

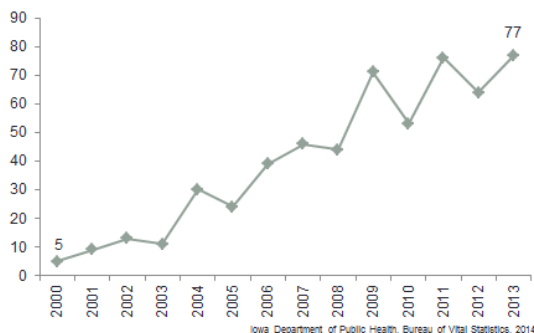
New data from the Iowa Department of Public Health show overdose deaths in the State related to methadone, other opioids and other synthetic narcotics—primarily pain relievers—increased to an all-time high of 77 in 2013. Heroin deaths jumped from eight in 2012 to a record high of 20 in 2013.

“Because of chemical similarities, prescription pain reliever abuse leads some to use heroin, and both substances can be lethal if consumed in ways that are not safe or legal,” said Lukan. “It’s critical that we talk with children about the dangers of misusing drugs, and that we carefully manage our medicines.”

Most Iowa sites collecting unused medicines will be open Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. To find the Iowa Take Back drop-off site nearest you, or to get more information on how to prevent or get help for prescription drug abuse, go to <http://www.IowaMedicineTLC.org>.

Saturday is the final Take Back Day sponsored by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, because of pending changes in federal regulations designed to make it easier to safely dispose of medicines. Since 2010, the DEA has joined with local law enforcement agencies and community organizations to remove more than 2,000 tons of old or unwanted medicines from U.S. homes, including 21 tons in Iowa.

Iowa Drug-Related OD Deaths: Pain Relievers
Rx Methadone, Other Opioids & Other Synthetic Narcotics



Iowa “Take-Back” Initiative
Pounds of Rx Drugs Collected

